



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, March 7, 2007

***NAPOLITANO VISITS ARIZONA TROOPS IN IRAQ and KUWAIT
Brings Greetings and Good Wishes from the People of Arizona***

PHOENIX – Governor Janet Napolitano delivered an in-person “thank you” this morning, to Arizona troops stationed inside the combat zone in Iraq.

“It is such a privilege to see these military men and women in person, and to personally thank them,” said Governor Napolitano. “They have sacrificed so much and worked so hard. It is truly humbling, and a genuine honor, to talk to them and spend time with them.”

The Governor met this morning with members of the 332nd Medical Group – which includes troops from Luke Air Force Base – at the Balad Air Force Base, about 70 miles north of Baghdad. While in Balad, the Governor also visited Camp Anaconda, the largest military installation currently operating in Iraq, greeting troops from several other units.

The Governor left Arizona on Sunday, bound for the Middle East, at the invitation of Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. For safety reasons, details of the Governor’s trip were kept secret. She arrived in Baghdad yesterday for a meeting with Iraqi ministers and a briefing by the top American military commander in Iraq, General David Patraeus.

From Balad, the Governor traveled to the Tallil Airbase, near Nasiriyah, where she had lunch with troops and toured the area. The Governor viewed first-hand the operations of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) assigned to Dhi Qar and Muthana. PRTs are relatively small groups made up of military and civilian members with expertise in a variety of areas. They work with local Iraqi business, community and elected leaders engaged in reconstruction projects.

The Governor left Arizona Sunday, and is traveling at the invitation Defense Secretary Robert Gates. She is accompanied by two other governors, Tim Pawlenty of Minnesota and Brad Henry of Oklahoma. Per restrictions set in place for safety reasons by the Department of Defense, release of details regarding the remainder of her itinerary is also restricted.

Photographs of Arizona troops visiting with the Governor will be posted as available at www.azgovernor.gov.

ADD TWO

Included below for your reference is general deployment information regarding members of the Arizona National Guard.

National Guard Information

Latest numbers:

- Total number of soldiers and airmen in the Arizona National Guard:
 - Army - 5,108
 - Air - 2,400
- Number of Arizona Guard on the Border: 514
- Number Arizona Guard in Theater (deployed overseas): 1,480
- Number of Soldiers and Airmen on Arizona Border mission (all states): 2,248

Units in the Middle East:

Unit: 222nd Transportation Unit

Members: 167

Arizona Location: Casa Grande and Yuma

Deployed in Kuwait

Mission: transport solid/bulk material; running convoys from Kuwait all the way to northern Iraq

Expected Return Date: August 2007

Unit: 258th Rear Area Operation Center

Members: 27

Arizona Location: Glendale

Deployed in Iraq

Mission: support the day-to-day operations of the base

Expected Return Date: September 2007

Unit: 259th Engineer Company

Members: 168

Arizona Location: Phoenix and Flagstaff

Deployed in Iraq

Mission: Although using an Engineer Company structure, they are doing convoy security missions.

Expected Return Date: November 2007

Unit: 1/285th Attack Helicopter Battalion

Members: 458

Arizona Location: Marana

Deployed in Afghanistan

Mission: close air support (this unit transitioned from the AH-64A to the AH-64D Longbow which is manufactured in Mesa)

Expected Return Date: January 2008

Unit: 640th Aviation Intermediate Maintenance

Arizona Location: Marana

Deployed in Afghanistan

Mission: helicopter maintenance

Expected Return Date: January 2008